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GEORGE F. HENSHALL .....MANAGER

TUESDAY, ..... APRIL 20, 1909

## LOSS FROM INSECTS.

An interesting bulletin lately issued by the Bureau of Entomology of the U. S. Department of Agriculture is entitled, "Economic Loss to the People of the United States through Insects that Carry Disease." It is by Dr. L. O. Howard, chief of the bureau. In the introduction there are some facts now familiar, also some rather startling ones less commonly known. Among things definitely proved and generally accepted it is mentioned "that malaria in its different forms is disseminated among the individuals of the human species by the mosquitoes of the genus Anopheles, and that the malarial organism gains entrance to the human system, so far as known, only by the bite of mosquitoes of this genus;" and "that yellow fever is disseminated by the bite of a mosquito known as Stegomyia calopus (possibly by the bites of other mosquitoes of the same genus), and, so far as has been discovered, this disease is disseminated only in this way."

So much for what has often been published here and elsewhere. Probably what follows will come as a shock to most people, some of the insects named as propagators of loathsome and deadly disease being commonly regarded merely as agents of discomfort: "Further, it has been scientifically demonstrated that the common house fly is an active agent in the dissemination of typhoid fever, Asiatic cholera and other intestinal diseases by carrying the causative organisms of these diseases from the excreta of patients to the food supply of healthy individuals; and that certain species of fleas are the active agents in the conveyance of bubonic plague. Moreover, the tropical disease known as filariasis is transmitted by a species of mosquito."

This last item contains a most serious warning to all inhabitants of tropical countries. Filariasis in one development is the horrible disease elephantiasis, prevalent in groups of the South Sea Islands, which is the scientific name for black leprosy. The definition of "Filaria" in the Standard Dictionary is as follows: "1. A genus typical of Filariidae. 2. A nematode or thread worm of this genus, parasitic in man and other animals. F. medinensis is the guinea-worm. F. sanguinis hominis is formed in the blood of those affected with chyluria or elephantiasis."

Proceeding the bulletin quoted says: "The purulent ophthalmia of the Nile basin is carried by the house fly. A similar disease in the Fiji Islands is conveyed by the same insect. The house fly has been shown to be a minor factor in the spread of tuberculosis. The bedbug has been connected with the dissemination of several diseases. \* \* \* The literature of the whole subject has grown enormously during the last few years, and the economic loss to the human species through these insects is tremendous. At the same time, this loss is entirely unnecessary, the diseases in question can be controlled, and the suppression of the conveying insects, so absolutely vital with certain of these diseases and so important in the others, can be brought about."

It is unnecessary to summarise the entire bulletin, some of its demonstrations being generally known, but a few statements are worth noting. The cost of screening against insects in the United States alone "must surely exceed ten millions of dollars per annum." "Prof. Irving Fisher, in one of his papers before the recent International Tuberculosis Congress, declared that tuberculosis costs the people of the United States more than a billion dollars each year." The annual death rate from malaria in the United States is given as nearly 12,000. These are taken from scores of startling statistics both of this country and other lands. On its last page the bulletin, commenting on an address on Malaria in Greece by Ronald Ross before the Oxford Medical Society in 1906, says:

In considering carefully this suggestive argument of Major Ross does it not appear to indicate the tremendous influence that the prevalence of endemic disease must exert upon the progress of modern nations, and does it not bring the thought that those nations that are most advanced in sanitary science and preventive medicine will, other things being equal, assume the lead in the world's work? Who can estimate the influence of the sanitary laws of the Hebrew scriptures upon the extraordinary persistence of that race through centuries of European oppression—centuries full of plague years and of terrible mortality from preventable disease? And what more striking example can be advanced of the effect of an enlightened and scientifically careful attention to the most recent advances of preventive medicine upon the progress of nations than the mortality statistics of the Japanese armies in the recent Russo-Japanese war as compared with the corresponding statistics for the British army during the Boer war immediately preceding, or for the American Army during the Spanish war at a somewhat earlier date?

With a great chorus of approval yesterday the House signed its own certificate of good character, proclaimed itself free from graft and suspicion of graft and, through two of its great statesmen—Kaniho and Keawala—threatened to exclude the reporters from the daily papers from its sacred portals.—Advertiser.

Why say that the "House" through two of its great statesmen did a thing which it was against doing, as far as any record shows, by 28 to 2?



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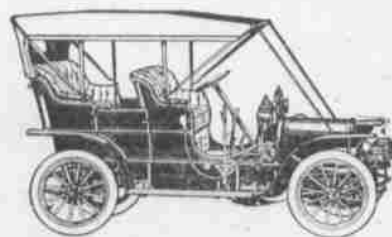
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